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boys," says he, "I'll leave it to yourselves aren't most of you unlearned men, and isn't it clear from this, that if you go reading the Bible you'll wrest it to your own destruction? St. Peter warns you against it, and the book itself, warns you against it; and," says he, "take my advice, and leave it to your clergy, that's learned and knowledgeable about such matters, and don't destroy your souls by reading a book that you can't understand." Well, sir, this troubled me greatly; and when I went home after mass I looked in the Donay, and, sure enough, there were the words, and I couldn't tell what to make of them; but after a while some of the boys came in, and says Andy, "I hope you're satisfied now that the Bible isn't fit for the likes of you. And," says he, "take care that you don't destroy your own soul with it; and," says he, "isn't it a mighty great notion you have of yourself to think you could understand it? And," says he, "you're very fond of raking up what St. Peter says against our Church; but I think St. Peter has done for you now—he has stopped your jaw for once." "Troth," says Mick, "that's true anyhow; and myself doesn't know what to make of St. Peter. When I heard of his being in favour of discussion, and ordering every man to give a reason for the hope that is in him,^b I set him down for a Protestant; but now it looks as if he was a true Roman; for he's as much against the Bible as Father John himself." Well, sir, I was quite bothered, and hadn't a word in my mouth; but by great good luck the Reader came in and took up the argument; and, says he, "boys, it's no use arguing without referring to the book itself," and with that he pulled out a *Donay* Bible, and made any of the boys that had them do the same. And after he read out the verses, he showed us that St. Peter was speaking of St. Paul's Epistles, and saying that St. Paul had spoken of the same things about which he had been speaking a little before—namely, the destruction of the world and the coming of Christ; and that in these subjects there were some things hard to be understood, which unlearned people twisted and turned to their own destruction. "Them's the very words of Father John," says Andy; "and that's the reason he won't let the boys have Bibles." "Well," says the Reader, "whatever Father John may think, that's not what St. Peter thought; for he didn't tell the people not to read the Bible; he only told them to take warning by the examples of those who made a bad use of the Scriptures." "But," says Jerry, "didn't the order them to have no call at all to the Bible?" "No," says the Reader, "he didn't do any such thing." "Well," says he, "Father John told us plainly that St. Peter ordered them to give up Bible reading altogether." "Well," says the Reader, "you can see for yourself that he did no such thing; but he told them to take heed to themselves not to fall into the error of those who wrested the Scriptures to their own destruction." "But," says Andy, "isn't it all the same? Sure, when he warned the people against destroying themselves by means of the Bible 'twas all one as if he told them to have no call to it." "I don't think it's the same thing at all," says the Reader; "for," says he, "if I warned you not to cut yourself with that knife, 'twould be a very different thing from telling you never to handle a knife again, and, in like manner, if I warned you against making a bad use of a book, 'twould be very different from telling you to have nothing to say to the book at all; and," says he, "if St. Peter wished to keep the people from the Bible, he would have said so; but, instead of that, he only warns them against misusing it." "I suppose," says Mick, "he meant that we're to use the Bible, but not abuse it, by twisting and turning its meaning." "Just so," says the Reader; "for if we use it properly it's a blessing, but if we twist it about to suit ourselves we're wresting it to our own destruction." "But, after all," says Andy, "isn't it easier to do as our priests do? to keep it from the people entirely, and then there's no fear of their twisting or turning it at all." "It's easier, no doubt," says the Reader; "but I'm thinking in that case the remedy would be worse than the disease." "How so?" says Andy. "Because," says he, "the soul would be starved entirely without the word of God. The Bible is meat and drink to it," says he; "and if you take it away, the soul will starve for want of it." "Troth," says Mick, "that reminds me of Con Kelly's horse." "How so?" says the Reader. "Why," says Mick, "the horse got at the oat-bin one day, and eat until he got a surfeit; so Con asked his landlord (a fine English gentleman) what ought he to do; and, says he, 'my man, my advice is, never give your horse another grain of oats, and then there will be no fear of a surfeit.' 'True for your honour,' says Con; 'there would be no fear of a surfeit, but there would be some fear of his dying altogether on me; and to tell your honour the truth, I think the remedy is worse than the disease,' and when the priests take away the Bible that God gave as food for our souls, like He gave oats as food for horses, I can't help thinking of Con Kelly and his landlord." "That's the very way, then," says the Reader; "and you all see how foolish 'twould be to keep oats from a horse for ever, because he had once eat too much; but wouldn't it be still more absurd to keep oats from every horse in the parish, because one or two horses had injured themselves with it?" "Faix," says Jerry, "that would be too foolish entirely."

^b 1 Peter, iii. 15.

'Twould be bad enough to keep it from the one that had made a bad use of it, but 'twould be too bad to keep it from the others, that hadn't misused it at all.' "Well," says the Reader, "just see how the priests act. They aren't content with keeping the Bible from those who wrest it to their own destruction, but they do their best to keep it from every one." "Troth," says Mick, "I see now that we're sold entirely; for," says he, "if one man in the parish makes a bad use of his Bible, that's no reason why we should all be hindered from reading it. And," says he, "Father John might just as well stop the oats from all the horses in the parish, on account of Con Kelly's horse eating too much." "And moreover," says the Reader, "who are the people that St. Peter says wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction?" "The unlearned and unstable," says Andy. "Well," says the Reader, "whose fault is it that you're unlearned in the word of God? Isn't it the fault of your priests, who don't instruct you in it? And," says he, "the way to hinder you from being unlearned in the Scriptures would be to grind it into you ever and always; and," says he, "if the priests gave every man a Bible, and had it taught every day in their schools, and preached out of it constantly, and had Sunday schools for teaching it to the children, then the people wouldn't be unlearned, or wrest it to their own destruction; and," says he, "instead of that verse teaching you to put away the word of God, it should teach you to be twice as diligent in reading it, and that you should study it night and day, and get all the instruction you could about it, and then there would be no fear of your wresting it to your destruction." "Well," says Jerry, "it's a great ease to me to find that St. Peter isn't against the Bible, but only against people being ignorant and unlearned in it; and, sure enough, the way to prevent us from being unlearned in the Scriptures is to give it out to us, and explain it to us; but I'm thinking that keeping the Bible from us isn't a good way to make us learned in it." "But," says Andy, "the word 'unlearned' in the text means them that are unlearned in Latin and Greek, such as the likes of us that never went through college." "Well," says the Reader, "I don't think it could mean that; for if it did, then the Apostles themselves would have wrested the Scriptures to their own destruction; for we're told that some of them were 'illiterate and ignorant men,' and we know that there were poor fishermen among them, that I'm thinking never went through college." "That sets my mind at rest," says Jerry; "for it's plain that it can't be college learning St. Peter means." "Isn't it a queer thing," says Mick, "that the priests never say a word against any book but God's Book? There's many a bad book in the parish, with bad pictures, and bad songs, that put bad thoughts into people's heads, and still the priests never say a word against them; but they're ever and always speaking against the Bible." "True for you," says Jerry, "and it surprises me that they don't hold their tongues entirely about it. If they had sense they wouldn't speak of it at all, good or bad, for they're only burning their fingers with it. They ought to make the child's bargain with it—'let me alone, and I'll let you alone.' "But you should remember," says the Reader, "that it takes two to make a bargain. The priests would be glad enough to let the Bible alone if it would let them alone; but the Bible won't make that bargain with them—it won't let them alone; so their only chance is to put it down; for if they don't, it will put them down." "How is that?" says Andy. "Why," says the Reader, "a priest can't open his mouth but the Bible is down upon him. When he's coaxing the money out of some poor fellow for sprinkling his boat with holy water, the Bible says:—'Through covetousness, with feigned words, you're making merchandise of him,' and when he's screwing the half crowns out of the poor creatures for masses, the Bible says—'Keep thy money to thyself, to perish with thee; because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money,' and when he's striking a bargain for redeeming a soul out of purgatory, the Bible says—'You were not redeemed with corruptible things, as gold or silver, but with the precious blood of Christ,' and when he repeats the commandments, the Bible says—'Where's the second commandment, you schemer?'—where's the commandment about graven images?—why have you left some of me out?—isn't that nice treatment for the word of God?" Then, when he tells you to pray to the saints, to put in a good word for you, the Bible says—'Don't be deceiving the people, for there's but one mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus'; then, when the priest runs away from the Protestant ministers, the Bible says—'Aren't you a purty Christian, that can't give a reason for the hope that is in you?' and, says the Bible, 'why are you afraid of the light, if so be that you're holding on to the truth?' then when he's telling you how holy the priests are because they don't marry, the Bible says—'Arra, don't be making fools of the people—wasn't St. Peter a married man?' and doesn't St. Paul say—'Let deacons be the husbands of one wife?' and when he promises to give you absolution, and to blot out your sins, the Bible says—'Take care what you're at; there's none can do that but God; listen—

^a Acts iv. 13.
^b 2 Peter, ii. 8.
^c Acts viii. 30.
^d 1 Peter, i. 18.
^e Exodus xx. 4, 5.^f 1 Tim. ii. 5.
^g 1 Peter, iii. 15.
^h John iii. 20, 21.
ⁱ Matt. viii. 14.
^j 1 Tim. iii. 12.

to what He says—I am He that blot out thy iniquities for my own sake.'^m When the priest warns you against reading the Bible, the Bible itself says, 'Search the Scriptures,' when he tells you that you can't understand the Scriptures, the Bible says, 'Didn't Timothy from his infancy know the Holy Scriptures.'ⁿ And when he says, 'that the Scriptures will ruin you,' the Bible says, 'No, but 'twill instruct them into salvation.' He can't even curse a jumper, or horsewhip a souper, but the Bible is at him.^o So that you see, boys," says the Reader, "the Bible won't make the bargain of let me alone and I'll let you alone, and the priests see plainly that if they don't put it down, it will put them down." "Why, then," says Jerry, "if it comes to that, I know who has the best chance. And," says he, "I'd back the Bible any day against all the priests in Ireland." And to tell your honour the truth, I'm beginning to be something of the same mind myself.

Your humble servant to command,
DAN CARTHY.

ST. KIELAN'S WELL.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

SIR.—As you are desirous of information as to popular superstitions in this country, I beg to inform you that there is a holy well near Hollymount, in the county Mayo, over which grows a very fine old ash tree. The superstition is, that it came and grew there in one night. The well is dedicated to St. Kielan, and has a regular station. It is melancholy to see the poor Romanists going their rounds at this place, drinking at the well, and depositing offerings, bits of corduroy, red flannel, wool, calico, horse and cow hair. There is a regular path-way round the well and tree. No Roman Catholic passes this place, which is on the road side, without bowing reverentially towards the tree, and sometimes taking off their hats; even when returning from the chapel, quite drunk, they stop to bow at the tree. Neither priests nor monks ever raise their voice against this gross idolatry.

Faithfully yours,
A CONSTANT READER.

FARMING OPERATIONS FOR JUNE.

Weeds are now growing apace, and require the constant use of the hoe to keep them down.

Carrots, Parsnips, Swedes, and Mangels, which have been sown in time, will require hoeing and singling out before the end of the month. Keep them clean; for, if the weeds are suffered now to get a head of the crop, the trouble and expense to keep them down will be much increased, and no after management will recover them from the injury sustained. Where the necessary breadth of Swedes and mangels has not been got in, every exertion must be made to do so, or other green crops substituted.

Dale's hybrid and the Aberdeen turnips should be sown before the end of the month to ensure good crops.

Beans and Peas, when sown in drills, should be hoed between and earthed up; if sown broadcast, they must be hand-hoed and weeded for the last time.

Clover and Grass seeds, where not sown immediately after the corn, should now be sown without delay, as the grain crops will be shooting into the culm or seed stem, when it would be injurious to either harrow or roll them.

Winter Vetches sown with oats or rye will now be in process of consumption, and the land prepared for and sown with such varieties of the turnip tribe as will be most applicable to the date of sowing.

Potatoes should be carefully attended to; those planted in lazy beds should be carefully hand-wed, and a little fresh earth put amongst them, and such as are but coming up should have some fresh earth dug from the furrows and strewed over them. Those planted in drills should be hand and horse-hoed between, and earthed up lightly with the double mould board plough.

Rape and Hundred-headed Cabbage should now be sown where it is required to have strong plants to put out in the stubble lands after harvest: sow thinly in clean, rich, well-tilled land, in beds four feet wide with 18 inch alleys between; keep them clean, and when well up, thin out to 5 or 6 inches every way; they will be strong, hardy plants for putting out when required.

Clover and Ray-grass will now be coming in to succeed the vetches for soiling; let it lie exposed to the sun and air for 5 or 6 hours after being cut, before using it; this prevents hove.

Pigs may now be put on green vetches and clover, given in their yards, or they may with great benefit and profit be turned out in clover paddock, and kept there day and night, on which they thrive rapidly.

Odds and ends.—See that the manure, as it is being turned out for the green crops, is not left exposed to the sun, wind, or rain, to dissipate its fertilizing components, but that it be deposited at once in the drills, and covered up with the drill plough; cut and stack turf for fuel, empty ponds, ditches, water courses, and cart it to the compost ground, there to be mixed when dry enough with lime, or other rich fertilizing materials.—*Farmers' Gazette.*

^m Isaías xliii. 25.
ⁿ John v. 39.^o 2 Tim. iii. 15.
^p 2 Tim. iii. 15.
^q 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25.